

COUNTRY Greece

SUBJECT IDEA ("Ioros Desmos Ellenon Axiomatikon",  
or Sacred Bond of Greek Officers)

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1. IDEA took original form as a small secret group of junior officers of the Greek Army late in 1944. It was created essentially as a non-political officers' organization dedicated to the task of helping to rid Greece of the Communist menace, and its founders specifically disavowed party preference among the existing Greek political parties. One of the objectives of the organization, and one which has been pursued vigorously by IDEA in the course of the past two years, has been the creation of a Greek National Army answering to the strategic and tactical requirements of Greece and maintaining the traditions of the army as against alien ideological influences of any kind.
2. With the past year, with Greece's political and military situation growing constantly more precarious, IDEA abandoned its original intention of not interfering in the political life of the country, and undertook to make its influence felt on various members of the Greek Government and of the higher echelons of the Greek Army. Most recently, it has been reliably reported as inclining in favor of a strong central government to consist of members of the Greek Parliament chosen by the Parliament, who have never before held a high political office. It is intimated that IDEA would also regard with favor the appointment of a commanding officer of the armed forces of the country to be given full powers to carry out the decisions of the government in the military field and to act, in brief, as a supreme commander over all national defense forces. Coupled with the existence of martial law throughout the country this, of course, would be approximately a military dictatorship.
3. About one year ago, IDEA was in touch with Spiros Markezinis, representatives of the Greek Court, and representatives of the Liberal Party with a view to assisting in a solution of the problem of the Greek Army high command. At that time, IDEA regarded with disfavor a request by Markezinis that IDEA use its influence to break up the then newly formed Coalition Government. It was also at that time that Markezinis urged IDEA to support General Alexander Papagos for the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Greek Armed Forces.
4. Politically speaking, the various reports of contacts between IDEA and political and military personalities lead to the conclusion that IDEA is essentially conservative in its basic policy, and it will support or even bring about a dictatorial form of government in the event the Greek situation should reach an impasse. King Paul is aware of the existence and the

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objectives of IDEA, although he does not want this fact generally known. IDEA does not consider General Papagos to be a man of extraordinary ability, but does feel that in an emergency he could become a suitable front for a non-political military-service government so long as the prestige of the King would not be damaged in the event of the failure of such a government. In this connection it should be mentioned that one of the compelling reasons which led to the formation of IDEA was the existence within the Army of the Vendiris-controlled secret officers' organization (RAN) which IDEA has always looked upon as a British instrument for perpetuating its influence within the senior officers' ranks of the army.

5. The membership of IDEA is organized into groups called Bonds (Desmoi). The higher governing council which is located in Athens is called the Governing or Executive Bond and consists of about seven members and a small staff. The next lower echelon is the Regional Bond of which there are five. Under this are the Guard Bonds which are to be found in every large headquarters unit. Finally there is the Bond to be found in the smaller army units maintaining direct liaison with the Guard Bonds. On 30 March 1948, it was estimated that IDEA numbered almost eight hundred members. Membership in IDEA is composed of officers up to and including the rank of colonel. Although originally it was intended to restrict membership to officers up to and including the rank of major, extensive promotions of members have resulted in the newer policy. A lack of financial means has been a serious handicap to the more ambitious plans of IDEA for a broader membership and a more extensive influence toward obtaining benefits for the army and correcting abuses which, in the opinion of the leaders of IDEA, confound both the Army and the country.
6. Although the present make-up of the Executive Bond is not specifically known, the following are the principal personalities having a hand in the direction of IDEA.
  - a. Captain (Artillery) Konstantinos Zacharakis
  - b. Captain (Artillery) Argyrios Mardas
  - c. Captain (Engineers) Michael Kiourtsoglou
  - d. Captain (Infantry) Emmanuel Zacharakis
  - e. Captain (Artillery) Nikolaos Assimakopoulos
  - f. Major (Infantry) I. Karabotsos
  - g. Major (Cavalry) P. Panourgias
  - h. Major (Engineers) Ballas
  - i. Major G. Maraveleas
  - j. Lt. Col. (Cavalry) Gogousis
7. Although IDEA looks with respect on General Demetrios Yadzis, it continues to admire and favor General Stylianos Kitrilakis. It is difficult to estimate the exact influence of IDEA, but it can be safely said that this organization constitutes a definite, potential factor of considerable weight in the event that the situation in Greece leads to a political - military type of solution

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